

September 8, 1945

Mr. Cum Posey
616 Amity Street
Homestead, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Posey:

I am in receipt of your air mail special of September 7 which, I am certain, was not written for my consumption. My impression is that you have written this letter for the consumption of other persons, possibly, Mr. Saperstein, Mr. Wilson, etc. whose judgments you are, possibly, trying to influence against me, because you know that what you have said is not true.

When we planned for colored baseball at Briggs Stadium, this season (Mr. Zeller and I) we didn't decide on more than four games. The four games originally scheduled were to be played --one each month, during June, July, August and September. I have absolute charge of booking the teams and arranging these games. Neither you nor Mr. Wilson had approached me concerning a date, consequently, neither the Homestead Grays nor the Baltimore Elite Giants were considered, originally. However before the season got underway I thought that it would be a good thing to have the teams included in the schedule, notwithstanding. I took the matter up with Mr. Zeller and he agreed willingly, consequently, the Homestead Grays and the Baltimore Elite Giants were finally booked. There has never been any talk about which teams or which leagues should be played.

You make the untrue statement about my owing you and Mr. Green one hundred (\$150.00) and fifty dollars. You know well that such a statement is a vicious lie and that the facts are as follows-----It rained on June 3 when the Homestead Grays and the Elite Giants played at Briggs Stadium and the attendance was kept down so low that my share was not sufficient to pay the expenses that I had incurred and you and Mr. Green, each gave me the extra one hundred and fifty (\$150.00).

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After you refused to play the Birmingham Black Barons and I reported the same, Mr. Zeller decided that he would go to his home in Fort Worth, Texas after my game on September 9. The Tigers won't return until the 23rd and that will give him about two weeks with his family. Now, you have the truth. That is why Mr. Zeller would not reconsider allowing me to book for September 16. When we finally learned that you wanted to play, it was too late and he would not agree to a game on that date. I not only approached him once. I asked him a second time if he would endeavor to let me have a game on that date. The deposit which Hayes made for the Birmingham Black Barons has been returned, although I offered it to them immediately after the date was refused and Mr. Hayes promised to let me know whether or not he wanted the deposit back or whether he wanted it to stay up for a game on September 30.

After the Birmingham Black Barons and Homestead Grays game was cancelled, I then decided to put forth every effort to make the Sept. 9 attraction a big one. Hence, the Kansas City Monarchs were substituted for Newark, largely, because the Monarchs and "Satchel" Paige always draw well here. It is also a fact that Kansas City has never been a headache to us at Briggs Stadium. Both the players and management have been swell people to do business, consequently, it is only human to give consideration to people who, themselves, are swell and cooperative.

Coming, now, to my position with the Pittsburgh Courier Publishing Company---I have been with the concern many, many years and have risen from "scratch". I do not live in Pittsburgh. I have no relatives in Pittsburgh and I have had no strings pulled for me in my successful endeavor to make good with the Corporation. I was promoted to the position of editor and district manager on merit alone. If the officers of this Company consider me efficient and you consider me otherwise, the reflection is on the officers of this concern, incidentally, the Pittsburgh Courier Publishing Company is considered one of the best managed Negro businesses in the United States.

The Detroit Baseball Company that operates Briggs Stadium has a reputation for unusual efficiency in baseball. Both Mr. Briggs and Mr. Zeller have expressed their satisfaction with me as have, also, others in the business office. If you think me unsatisfactory and they think me satisfactory the reflection is on the Detroit Baseball Company and Briggs Stadium. Intelligent and thinking people have their own opinions and estimations of what it takes to succeed in life. Not very long ago, the Pittsburgh Courier Publishing Company had occasion to make a very careful survey in the city in order to determine whether or not I have been a success. I invite you to consult our president, Mr. Ira Lewis; our vice president, Mrs. Daisy Lampkin; our auditor, Mr. Henry Lindsay; and our general manager, Mr. William Nunn. They will be able to tell you how I am considered by an overwhelming majority of local citizens.

Whether or not I might remain interested in Negro Baseball beyond this year is a matter that I shall give careful consideration during the winter months. I will admit quite frankly that I am considering severing connections with Negro Baseball, largely because many of the club

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owners interested in the game, like you, are unreasonable. In some instances they want consideration that can't be given and in all instances they are selfish in the matter of compensation toward those who are willing and able to help them. Finally, among your many loose statements, you declare that I am responsible for no game of the Negro World Series being played in Detroit. That is so ridiculous that it really should be given no deference, but in passing, I need only say this --- If one of these games of the series were played here, I would promote it if it were staged at Briggs Stadium and I'm sure it would be a money-maker. Why on earth would I stand in my own way to make money? Truth is, as you know, I don't own Briggs Stadium and cannot promote games there, without the consent of the general manager, Mr. Zeller, who, as aforementioned, has decided and declared the season closed following September 9.

Unfortunately, Mr. Posey, you are a gentleman who wants his own way about everything at all times. If you can't have everything as you want it, everything is wrong and everyone unable to do your bidding is a rascal. I understand the whole thing now. When you signed with me for September 16, you had in mind holding the date open for whatever might suit your own program and purpose. Mr. Zeller and I were very anxious to play Birmingham, because Birmingham has already been here and made an excellent showing. When Mr. Zeller learned that you were not interested in playing Birmingham he lost interest and declared that there would be no game on September 16.

Very truly yours,

John R. Williams

P.S.... Precisely the same thing happened last year, Mr. Zeller decided that he wanted to go home cancelling the game between the Cubans and Baltimore Elite Giants --- Ask Tom Wilson or Elex Pompey about that.

JRW

JRW/lb